

GUIDE

A Publication of the Paulist Fathers

A LAYMAN LOOKS AT CONVERT-MAKING

Frank Sheed

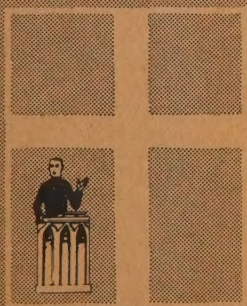
TRADITION AND TEACHING RELIGION

Reverend F. Somerville, S.J.

APPROACH TO CHRISTIAN UNITY

Reverend Joseph Dean

APRIL 1960, No. 147





IT SEEMS TO ME

What The Layman Can Do

Converts frequently remark that their journey to the faith might have been smoothed if the Catholic laity were more readily disposed to help them. Laymen, on the other hand, feel a sense of inadequacy and hesitate to "rush in where angels fear to tread." Here are a few simple but immensely helpful rules which we might impart to the laity.

1. When a religious topic crops up, always state the Catholic position as clearly as you can. If rusty or ignorant on the subject, investigate it, and seek an early occasion to amplify your previous remarks. If you evade the question, the non-Catholic may never ask it again.

2. If you sense that the non-Catholic is willing, offer him a carefully selected article, chapter in a book or pamphlet on that particular topic. It's best to present reading which has helped your own understanding of a subject. Continue to supply Catholic literature as long as a person's interest is sustained. A subscription to a well edited periodical may prove immensely informative. "A few pages of truth," said Father Hecker, "has often reversed a life time of error."

3. There's a price tag on every soul that is paid for only by prayer and sacrifice. So pray daily for that soul—adding some act of renunciation.

4. If he shows progress, invite and accompany him to visit a Catholic Church. Explain, simply, the purpose of everything you see. If he will attend a Catholic service, the Eucharistic Christ will bless him. And he will never be quite the stranger he was.

5. In time, help him to meet a sympathetic priest and accompany him to enroll in an inquiry class.

6. EASY DOES IT. Nervous, impatient apostles always do more harm than good. We should do all that we can. But we cannot force God's hand. Nor can we hasten a soul's spiritual growth. Kindly charity and understanding tact are much more effective than the cleverest arguments.

JOHN T. MCGINN, C.S.P.

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A Layman Looks at Convert-Making

By Frank Sheed

I have been asked to talk on the subject of convert-making from the point of view of the laity. In other words, I am speaking from the position of that section of the Catholic Church upon which the conversion of the country principally depends. That may sound like an exaggeration. Yet when I say that next to grace, the conversion of your country and mine depends primarily on the laity, I speak from profound conviction.

The first truth about our world is that it is an exceedingly noisy world. Airplanes roar through the sky; automobiles whiz along the highways; TV and radio clatter endlessly; and our mass circulation newspapers and magazines have their own way of screaming for our attention.

Our world is so noisy that practically no voice really gets heard. Pius XII said magnificent things, but the great mass of people have never heard them. They were drowned out by the noise. Our bishops, from time to time, issue highly important pastorals. But vast millions of people, even among Catholics, do not hear them because the noise is so loud. Our speakers and commentators may do a splendid job on TV or radio for a half hour in the week. But what they say is drowned out by the chatter of those other voices that talk all week long.

In this immeasurably noisy world, there is really only one voice that can be heard, the voice of a man speaking to his friend—speaking to the man next door, the man he works with, plays with, travels with. That voice, and only that, can secure attention. Since that is the only one that can be heard it is upon that voice that the diffusion of God's truth among the masses of the people must depend.

The Catholic laity are in touch with everybody; there is scarcely a person in the country who does not know at least one Catholic. Unless the laity are equipped to give the kind of preliminary instruction in the faith which will get the non-Catholic really interested and willing to consult a priest, then the vast mass will never be touched at all. I simply do not see how we can reach these throngs in any other way.

If you grant that, you can realize how much depends on the voice of the laity. And the tragedy is that the laity do not exercise their voice. So far as we speak at all, it is merely a faint whisper. If I had to put in one single word the principal obstacle to the conversion of the country, I would say unhesitatingly that it is the religious illiteracy of the laity.

Curiously enough, where this religious illiteracy is most striking is among the educated laity. There was a time in the Middle Ages when only the clergy could read and write. So far as religion is concerned, it is still true that only the clergy can read and write. In the Middle Ages, there was an occasional layman who was an exception to this general rule. So today there is a layman here or there who can say a word or two about theology, but the number is very small indeed. I meet many educated laymen, professional men, educators and scholars. As a class they are illiterate in matters that pertain to religion.

Some of them have been fairly well instructed in apologetics. They can prove the Church's teaching authority. But they do not really know the doctrines she teaches. Here you have the interesting situation of a Catholic laity delighted that the Church is in possession of all revealed truths—but apparently not in the least interested in the truths they are so delighted that the Church possesses.

Many educated laymen, especially those

A paper delivered at the National Conference on Convert Work, St. Paul's College, Seminary of the Paulist Fathers, Washington, D. C., October, 1959.

who are recent graduates, can make out a good case for the authenticity of the Gospels. But hardly one of them has read the Gospels. And among the handful who have read them, you do not meet many who know how to read them properly. One consequence is that, except for the high spots, they do not really know the life of our Lord. And they are unprepared to deal with the practical religious difficulties non-Catholics frequently raise.

Take a common example. Catholics are constantly asked: "Why don't you drop the cruel doctrine of hell and return to the simple teaching of love expressed by Christ in the Sermon on the Mount?"

This sermon is commonly assumed to be short. Most people think it ends with the last beatitude. As a matter of fact, it is an extremely long sermon—three chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel. And it happens to be the occasion on which Christ talked most about the subject of hell! But I have hardly ever met a Catholic layman who seemed able to give this answer to our objector—which means that on the whole we do not know the life of our Lord as depicted in the Gospels. And the remainder of the New Testament is an untrodden desert for many of us.

LACK DOCTRINAL KNOWLEDGE

In my work with the Catholic Evidence Guild, I have interviewed many laymen who were eager to speak for the Church at outdoor audiences. It was my task to discover how well they understood Catholic doctrine themselves. And this was frequently a shattering experience. When questioned about the Redemption, for example, there are many Catholics who explain that it really was not the Son of God who died on the cross, but only the human nature of Christ!

Numerous instances of this deplorable situation easily come to mind. There is no pleasure in dwelling upon them, but they do illustrate my point. In a newspaper account of a sermon by a well-known revivalist on the Ascension of our Lord, the preacher was reported as saying: "He returned to that heaven which for too long had been lonely without Him." (Can you imagine God the Father saying to God the Holy Ghost, "If only He would write!") Now I have repeated this quotation from the revivalist's sermon to a score of well

educated Catholic audiences and, so far as I could judge, no one has ever seen anything odd about this way of understanding the Incarnation.

How many educated Catholics, to say nothing of the uneducated, really know what the Church has to tell us about God? The Church, of course, teaches us that in the unity of God, there are Three Divine Persons. I am afraid that, for many laymen, their knowledge of God hardly goes beyond the proofs for God's existence. These arguments are valid, even magnificent proofs. But they prove the existence of a God who might be equally acceptable to the Unitarian, the Jew or the Moham-medan. One might be tempted to ask if it is really the Christian God who is in their thoughts and in their prayers.

Consider for a moment the case of those Catholics who do have some clear notion of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. They have been taught the theological terms in which the dogma is stated. They know the words. They know the phrases and sentences. They put them in the correct order. If you said something wrong about the doctrine, they would spot the error. But it is all like a theorem in geometry to them. It is accurate knowledge. But it is not alive; it is not real knowledge; it is not something personal to them. They do not see the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit as really distinct Persons; nor have they any idea why they are called Father and Son and Holy Spirit, or how while each is God, there is still but one God.

In the Middle Ages, when only the clergy could read and write, the barons were perfectly satisfied with the situation. They did not feel inferior because the clergy could do things the laymen was unable to do. If necessary, they could employ a cleric to write their letters. In too many cases, the modern layman does not feel any sense of inadequacy because he is lacking in religious knowledge. Tell a Catholic scientist that he is historically illiterate and he does not mind. Tell a Catholic classical scholar that he is mathematically illiterate and he is not disturbed. Each would be annoyed to be called simply illiterate; but neither minds one bit if you say "you are theologically illiterate." They just smile. Theology is for theologians; for professionals; for those in Holy Orders. The great dogmas belong to religion, but have no place in life.

*Between the intellectual and the non-intellectual
there is really no difference in intelligence.*

Now this, roughly, is the situation with regard to the laity upon whom so much depends for the spread of the faith. This religious illiteracy has a large bearing on the personal religious life of the layman, even apart from his obligation to explain the faith to others. When life runs smoothly without heavy trials or temptations, when a person is consoled by his devotions and the reception of the sacraments, it may not seem important to know and to be able to answer religious questions. But when perilous temptations assail a man, then he desperately needs God. An enormous number of the laity, under this kind of pressure, have to rely wholly on the will to carry them through. The intellect simply does not help. They may call upon the Holy Spirit for help, but they know very little about the Person to whom they call.

Moreover, they are missing so much of the sheer joy and excitement that comes from reflection on the great dogmas. With so sketchy a notion of the Blessed Trinity they can have no real notion of the Incarnation or the Redemption. So that when they go to Mass, for example, they have only a vague idea of the principal offerer or of the God to whom the sacrifice is offered, or why. It is possible, of course, to be a great saint without theological erudition. But a person would be a greater saint through study of Christian Doctrine because each new truth about God is a new reason for loving Him.

This brings me to the very heart of my main contention. For the layman not to know, not to enjoy and not to be able to state the great truths as the Church teaches them, dooms conversion work to a continuing frustration. His ignorance renders him speechless when the truth might be life-giving to the people with whom he mingles. The non-Catholic sorely needs truth. The Catholic layman is in the best position to enlighten him. But too often he is insufficiently instructed in the truths of faith. Hence the non-Catholic friend or neighbor remains unenlightened, uninterested and does not take his first steps toward the Church.

I publish books and I speak on street

corners. In the one occupation, I meet intellectuals. In the other, I meet people with no intellectual interests at all. Out of this twofold experience, there are two observations I'd like to make that seem pertinent to our discussion.

The first is that between the intellectual and the non-intellectual there is actually no difference in intelligence. There are intelligent "high-brows" and stupid "high-brows." There are intelligent "low-brows" and stupid "low-brows." The average of intelligence is about the same in each case. There is this, however, to be noted. In general the "low-brows" express themselves more intelligently: you are more apt to know what they are saying. With the "high-brows," half the time, you just wonder what they have in mind.

Secondly, when it comes to the great religious truths by which men should live, you find the same situation whether you deal with one sort or the other. What I discovered on the street corners has been verified again and again in the general world of people. Incidentally, you really do meet the non-Catholic world on the street corner. There you sow on stony ground. There you meet many who have only the slightest awareness of the Catholic Church and frequently are without the faintest interest. They are not the people who enter a convert class. They are not sufficiently concerned to take that step. They are those who just happen to be passing by: there they stand. And we try to hold their attention.

CHANGE IN THE PROTESTANT WORLD

Experience with the Evidence Guild leads me to believe that there has been an enormous change in the Protestant world during the last thirty or forty years. I would put it like this: up to that time, although they were anti-Catholic, people were not strictly non-Catholic. You might say that they were seventy per cent Catholic. They believed in the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Redemption and the Inspiration of Scripture. They were in possession of an enormous amount of Catholic truth, even though they

might be opposed to us. When you met people like that your task was to correct their wrong impression of us. You could point out wide areas of agreement. That is not so often the case nowadays. The non-Catholic today is really non-Catholic. There is not one of the doctrines I just mentioned that you can take for granted in anyone who is not a member of the Church.

ATHEIST IS DYING OUT

There is another significant change that should be noted. Three or four decades ago, there was a professed atheist at every meeting. And he does come now, occasionally. But he is usually an old man. The professed atheist is dying out. In a moment of peril, such a man may call upon God. But not because of any fundamental belief in God. His spontaneous appeal to God is to a symbol. The atheist is usually reacting against some false picture of God given him by Christians themselves. But there is something in his soul which would turn to God if you could help him to see into his own soul's depths. In any event, the dyed-in-the-wool atheist has almost vanished. Most people today do actually believe that there is a God.

Indeed, most people do believe that there is something special about Christ our Lord. But beyond that they do not go. Even churchgoers among them do not know what we really mean by God. They have only the vaguest concepts of Him. They just feel He is Somebody, somewhere; they bow when they hear His name. But after paying respect to God, there is nothing else they can do. They do not know what He is like, what He wants, what they can do for Him, what He can do for them. So it is that they frequently drop the first commandment about loving God and concentrate on the second about loving their neighbor. To an enormous extent, this is what religion means for many people.

We are dealing, then, with people who do not know even the beginning of the truths about God. They do not deny God: they respect Christ. But the extent of their knowledge is that He liked little children. Matters like "spirit," "immortality," "the future life" get only the vaguest kind of response from them. They vaguely remember the hymns they learned in childhood. Heaven seems to them nothing but a huge

church service. To reach it you have to spend your life denying yourself all those things which make life a little less intolerable. Your reward is to be admitted to this huge church service from which you are never allowed to depart. Hell, of course, is even worse—if you can conceive anything worse. Even at best, while nothing is actually denied regarding those fundamental truths, there is nothing of living truth in their minds.

If we want to win these throngs to Catholicism, we must first awaken interest and impart an initial understanding of these eternal verities. This we must do, ordinarily, before they will even consider coming to the Church. Who is to do this? I believe the laity must do it if the task is ever to be accomplished. Only they are in daily contact with the mass of their fellows. These people (I am thinking of the great multitude of non-Catholics) do not realize how much we could tell them—if we knew it ourselves, and if we knew how to tell it! So despite their needs and unconscious longings, their latent interest has not been captured to a point where they will come to our inquiry classes—or even to our street corner meetings.

But all our experience in the Evidence Guild tells us that their interest can be enlivened. When it is, they evidence a great love of dogma. And curiously enough of all the dogmas, the one they love best is the Blessed Trinity. I was talking one Sunday night a few weeks ago on the Holy Trinity in New York's Times Square. There were between three and four hundred people listening and nobody moved. The last forty minutes of my talk was devoted entirely to the subject of the Trinity. And when the questions came, this was the dogma about which most of them sought information. Once they grasp this truth, even in elementary fashion, they seem to have little or no difficulty with problems like the existence and nature of God. Perhaps this is not the logical way to proceed. But this is the way their minds work; we see this happening again and again.

Again I say that it is the laity who must give this preliminary instruction. And I must repeat that the laity cannot do it because they do not know the doctrines well enough to explain them.

What raises a horrifying problem in my mind is that the laity do not seem to mind.

Here is the vast mass of our fellow countrymen who are starved for want of the food our Lord designed them to possess. "Not by bread alone doth man live, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." Christian truth is food indeed and millions starve for lack of it.

We who ought to be relieving that famine do little or nothing about it. The vast mass of Catholic laymen have never lifted a finger to teach Catholic doctrine to anybody, never mean to do so, and don't mind it at all. Do we of the laity realize ourselves that God's word is food for the soul and that one dies spiritually without it?

I am not asking that all the laity become theologians. I am not a theologian. You could say that I am a business man with theological interests. What baffles me is why every Catholic should not cherish an interest in the truths of faith. People are immensely impressed when we simply state the truth and show how it matters to us. And when we go on to explain what the truth could mean to them and what difference it would make in their lives, many of them develop an active desire for a full, systematic course in Christian doctrine from a priest.

Tradition and Teaching Religion

By Reverend F. Somerville, S.J.

One of the permanent difficulties confronting teachers of religion is that of reconciling tradition and progress. In religion teaching, as in many other fields of activity, we meet those people who want to keep things as they are and those who are opposed to them, the so-called progressives.

There is, however, no real conflict between tradition and progress. Tradition, as Pope Pius XII pointed out, is something quite different from a mere attachment to the past. He himself was both conservative and progressive, because he saw in the Church "a vital law of continuous adaptation." The Church, he used to say, is a living organism; she grows, develops, and adapts herself to changing conditions whilst ever remaining the same Church of Christ.

Catechists must always remember that respect for tradition and desire for progress are by no means incompatible; the solution to the apparent conflict lies in continuity and development; whilst respecting the past we are not afraid of introducing new ele-

ments required by the "vital law of continuous adaptation."

It is necessary, however, to know what is true tradition. And this for two reasons. First, since catechesis is part of the Church's teaching ministry, religion teachers might apply to themselves those words of St. Paul: "This is how we ought to be regarded, as Christ's servants, and stewards of God's mysteries (i.e. his revealed truths). And this is what we look for in choosing a steward; we must find one who is trustworthy" (i.e. faithful to his master's will, not clinging to his own likes).

Secondly, a custom can creep in and become a "traditional" practice, and yet is not a true tradition. This so-called tradition should be dropped as soon as we become aware of its falseness or detect its weaknesses. We must be faithful to the mind of Christ as manifested in the mind of the Church.

In catechesis we hand on the Word of God. Now, "in old days, God spoke to our fathers in many ways and by many means, through the prophets; now at last he has

spoken to us with a Son to speak for him." (Heb. I.1.) Jesus Christ came among men as a prophet, that is to say, as a man with a mission from God to teach; the scene in the synagogue at Nazareth makes this quite clear. One purpose of his coming was to announce the Good News of salvation.

Our Lord entrusted to the Church the task of continuing his work. "Go make disciples of all nations (her teaching mission), baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost (her sanctifying mission), teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (her pastoral mission).

CHANGE OF MIND AND HEART

The book of the Acts and the Epistles provide us with a number of examples of primitive catechesis. We can see what was its constant theme: the Person of Jesus Christ who fulfilled with expectations of the Old Testament, who died, rose again, was exalted at the right hand of the Father in heaven, and was to come again in glory to judge mankind. The aim of the preaching was to bring about a change of mind and heart in the hearers and lead them to faith in Jesus Christ, after which Baptism was administered without further ado. We have a good example of this on the first Pentecost when some three thousand were converted.

This was the first phase of catechesis. The point worth noting is that Peter simply announced the Good News; there was nothing abstract about it: just the telling of certain facts about Jesus Christ and an urgent invitation to do something about it, namely, be converted and be baptized. After Baptism came the second phase of catechesis. The new Christians received a fuller instruction in the mysteries of faith which they had accepted globally. This was more doctrinal than the announcing of the message, although it was not made an abstract doctrine.

Bitter experience during the persecutions of the first three centuries prompted the Church authorities to organize a period of testing and instruction before admission to Baptism. Thus there arose the institution called the catechumenate, which existed from the third to the fifth centuries. Those who wished to become Christians were put through a careful and sometimes

lengthy probation to verify the genuineness of their conversion which involved a real turning away from pagan habits to the new moral standards required by Christianity. These "beginners" received a global presentation of the Christian Message, of which an example is found in St. Augustine's *De Catechizandis rudibus*. We notice that this instruction was essentially biblical and historical; nothing was learned by heart. At the end of the period the candidate was marked with the sign of the Cross and became a catechumen.

Distant fields look fair: yet closer scrutiny reveals arid patches. Catechumens were allowed to call themselves Christians, but one gets the impression that a minority, the fervent few, undertook to receive Baptism, the majority being content to remain semi-Christian until the approach of death. Moreover, when the organized catechumenate disappeared with the conversion of the barbarian peoples and the introduction of infant Baptism as a general practice, the form of catechesis remained the same: it was liturgical and addressed to adults. The children were not catered for, and adults did not receive regular doctrinal instruction.

The old method continued until the 12th or 13th century, yet even at this period systematic instruction was only rarely given; preaching was reserved to bishops and such systematic efforts as those of St. Dominic and Archbishop Thoresby of York seem to have been something of an innovation in this respect. Historians usually describe the Middle Ages as a period of "social catechumenate," when religion was not so much taught as imbibed by children in the family and parish communities. This is, undoubtedly, a most desirable situation, so long as the intellectual side of religious formation is not neglected. The great weakness of mediaeval catechesis became manifest at the time of the Reformation when vast areas of Europe could not hold their own against the new teachings.

Following Luther's example the Catholics brought out catechisms; these were primarily composed as concise handbooks for parish priests offering some guidance amid the doctrinal confusion of the period. Efforts were made to provide the faithful with clear ideas.

The eighteenth century proved to be a turning point in the history of catechesis.

and, as some would say, a turning point in the wrong direction. It was the age of enlightenment. The rational aspect of religious knowledge was given too much esteem at the expense of initiation into Christian living. A bookish teaching, with emphasis on man and human reason rather than on God and his revelation played the predominant part in religious instruction. At the end of the century, when obligatory schooling was introduced in Europe, religion became a school subject and religious instruction was primarily a matter of explaining catechism texts. Thus, what many people imagine to be the traditional way of teaching religion dates only from the 18th century.

Some efforts were made in the 19th century to return to the earlier tradition, but without success, because the influence of the great scholastic, or rather later scholastic, theologians was so strong. Emphasis was placed on religious *knowledge*, and any improvement was thought to come only from clearer ideas and verbal changes in the catechism-text.

In this 20th century reformers are trying to unite the best features of religious formation in the Church's tradition. They want to make the teaching more biblical and liturgical as it was in the early centuries and at the same time give due prominence to

doctrine, a prominence called for not only by the needs of the times but by the nature of revelation itself. After much experimentation and research, the leaders of the catechetical renewal have pretty well all come to the conclusion that we should present the matter of our teaching as the Good News of salvation in Christ, with its stress on the active love of God for men rather than on man's duties and obligations.

They argue that whereas the catechisms dating from before the 18th century have been too defensive and anthropocentric, we should now drop "apologetic" preoccupations and show the grandeur and beauty of our faith as well as its truth, thus making the faithful proud of their religion and others desirous of it. This is quite in accord with the "vital law of continuous adaptation," for the Protestant adversary is not the main trouble today, but the widespread religious indifference shown by all those who say that religion itself does not matter and we can get along quite well without it. Furthermore, experts maintain that catechesis should be more biblical, historical, liturgical and concrete than it has been for the last two or three hundred years. And finally, they see that it should be *active*, in the sense of engaging the spiritual activity of the pupils' minds and hearts.

Approach to Christian Unity

By Reverend Joseph Dean

Clergymen among our separated brethren insist that the "Roman Church" makes church unity impossible. The reason? We seem too intolerant, too unwavering toward compromise, and too narrow in our whole approach to unity.

In our turn, we deny the charge. We say that we are not intolerant, but rather that Truth of itself remains one and unchanging. We consider compromise out of the question because moral goodness is absolute. And we deny that we are narrow,

since our worship is not of our own making, but rather is the method that Almighty God Himself provided for us. With these traditional answers we feel secure that our way actually is God's way, and, therefore, above reproach.

A surprise awaits us, though, when we learn that many sincere people agree with our statements, but still hold to their original charge. They, too, know that Truth cannot be relative and that Law and Morality must remain as constant as God's nature in which they are founded.

They will even admit the value of the

Liturgy—going so far as to imitate it in some way in their own services. But they cannot help feeling that we are personally high-handed and cocky. They remark how infallible we claim to be, *but lacking so much in Christian charity.*

NOT ATTACKING DOCTRINE

When they call us intransigent and authoritarian we should not leap to the conclusion that Christian doctrine is being attacked. Such is not always the case. Very often they have a legitimate complaint about our manner, our attitude, our approach, our presentation. Frequently it is not what we say, but how we say it. At times our apparently unwarranted assumptions erect unfortunate barriers right at the start.

Could it be that the reason they sense contempt in us lies in this: that without realizing it, we do give off an attitude of contempt and condescension toward them as poor benighted heretics whom we are offering to save from the depths of their ignorance and bigotry? They accuse us of being the prejudiced ones, and we fail to grasp the extent and depth of this accusation, until our convert friends begin to enlighten us.

Listen to some of the questions of such converts, and see how you would answer them:

1. As a Catholic, do you possess a spirit of understanding and an ability to see the viewpoint of various non-Catholic groups?

2. Why do you use examples of miracles at Fatima and Knock that repel our friends rather than the miracles of Elias and Elisha which attract them?

3. Why bring up subjects such as relics and indulgences in the first few meetings with people, when matters such as prayer, the Church, the Mystical Body are so much more basic and more understandable?

4. Do you avoid words or phrases that are unwelcome to them, but rather use expressions that sound more "at home" to their Christianity? For instance, to them, such phrases as "Baptist Minister" or "the Baptists" are not nearly so friendly sounding as "the Baptist pastor" or "the Baptist people," and these can be said without those overtones we picked up along the line of our anti-Protestant background.

GUIDE

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5. Do you realize the depth of your antipathy toward Protestantism?

- (a) that your Irish-German-Slav ancestors were persecuted most viciously by Protestant groups, not alone in matters of religion, but economically, politically, and socially?
- (b) that as a consequence, the culture and family spirit of anti-Protestantism into which you were born have influenced you from early childhood, and still do?
- (c) that you must emphasize the principles of legitimate accommodation in order to get more of a balance into your contact with Protestant people with whom you associate?

While we cannot and may not compromise in dogma or morals, with the help of God's grace, in our manner, means and methods, we can actually help bridge the gap that separates us from our fellow Christians.

"*Other Sheep I have that are not of this fold,*" our Lord spoke the them, "*these also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.*" (John 10/16)

Guide Lights

FATHER PAUL FRANCIS ANNIVERSARY . . .

Congratulations to the Society of the Atonement on the recent celebration of the 50th year of its reception into the Church. Father Paul James Francis, founder of the Society had, previous to his conversion and that of his early associates, founded the (Anglican) Society of the Atonement at Graymoor in New York. From 1899 to 1909 they prayed and labored for the return of Separated Christians to the Holy See. In 1908, Father Paul, inaugurated the Chair of Unity Octave. A year later the founder and his disciples were received into the Church, and have continued indefatigably their ecumenical work. The Society now numbers 300 friars and almost 400 sisters. They recently accepted a post in England. Readers of GUIDE are encouraged to procure *One Fold*, a collection of essays and documents on the Chair of Unity Octave, ably edited by Edward F. Hanahoe, S.A., and Titus Cranny, S.A.

LITURGY AND CONVERT MAKING . . .

Congratulations to John B. Mannion of Washington, D. C., who was recently named executive secretary of the North American Liturgical Conference. Mr. Mannion was previously director of development and training for the National Council of Catholic Men. GUIDE rejoices in this new field for "Jack" Mannion's rich talents; quite, warm persuasiveness; and down-to-earth zeal. Twenty-nine years old, the father of four children, he helped to conduct census and information campaigns for numerous bishops. He taught CCD classes regularly. And he will bring to the Liturgical Apostolate a vivid awareness of the need for American Catholics to awake to their apostolic duties regarding convert-making.

SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH BUREAU . . .

Monsignor William A. McDonald, rector of the Catholic University of America in Washington, recently announced the establishment of a unique bureau of social research. The University will offer its extensive research resources to bishops and Catholic organizations who desire national, regional or diocesan surveys. The bureau is prepared to undertake censuses, polls and similar studies. The services of the

bureau will be available to governmental and private agencies as well. The new bureau will be administered by the Department of Sociology of which Dr. C. J. Nuesse is Dean and Monsignor Paul Hanly Furley is Department head.

SEMINARIANS' CONFERENCE ON CONVERT WORK . . .

The National Conference on Convert-Work, which sponsored two conventions for priests at St. Paul's College in Washington, D. C., has a counterpart to interest seminarians in convert work. On their own initiative, the Paulist students have arranged conventions for seminarians from the many houses of study on the campus of the Catholic University of America.

Approximately 175 student priests, seminarians and teaching brothers gathered at the Paulist Seminary on March 7th for an intensive program on many phases of this apostolate. This is the second convention of its kind and was under the direction of Father Joseph Walsh.

One of the most encouraging developments in the apostolate to non-Catholics in recent years is the enthusiastic interest on the part of students in our American seminaries. And the one-day program of the Conference recently held in Washington may suggest possible topics for similar conventions elsewhere:

9:30 "The Conversion of America: Problems and Possibilities." Rev. Kevin A. Lynch, C.S.P., editor of *Information* magazine.

10:45 "What non-Catholics Are Like." A panel discussion. Revs. William Manning, C.S.P., Grand Rapids, Mich.; John J. Keating, C.S.P., Columbus, Ohio; James B. Lloyd, C.S.P., New York City.

12:00 Dinner Talk. "The Priest's Everyday Contacts With non-Catholics." John T. McGinn, C.S.P., editor of GUIDE.

2:00 "Unused Potential: The Parish and the School." Rev. George G. Hagmaier, C.S.P., author of *Counseling the Catholic*.

2:30 Simultaneous Panel Discussions.

"Conversions and the Parish." Revs. Edward McLean, St. Joseph's Cathedral, Hartford, Conn.; Paul Collis, Sacred Heart Church, Bloomfield, N. J.; William Green-spun, C.S.P., Sociologist attached to Institute for Religion in America, moderator.

"Conversions and the Catholic High School." Bros. Thomas More, C.F.X., Principal of St. Xavier High School, Louisville, Ky.; Celestine Luke, F.S.C., Associate Professor of Theology, Manhattan College, New York, N. Y.; Rev. George G. Hagmaier, C.S.P., moderator.

Discussion Period.

4:15 Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING . . .

There's a difference of opinion among priests regarding the matter of advertising inquiry classes in the daily papers. All admit it's value, but some think the returns do not justify the fairly high advertising rates.

Monsignor Charles M. Walsh, director of the CCD in New York, is one of those who favors such advertising. Attractive ads in the New York *Journal-American* were run on three consecutive days. Along with an invitation to enroll in a course at one of the 26 co-operating centers was a return reply box requesting detailed information. About 400 applications for information were received.

Each applicant received a cordial letter from Monsignor Walsh, along with a list of all the centers conducting courses, indicating the center most accessible to the inquirer. In addition, the applicant received a card introducing him to the priest at the center nearest him. To each co-operating priest, Monsignor Walsh sent a complete list of all applicants with a request to notify the CCD office of those reporting to each of the classes.

Copies of all this material may be obtained by writing: Rt. Rev. Msgr. Charles M. Walsh, Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, 31 East 50th Street, New York 22, N. Y.

LOS ANGELES ANNIVERSARY . . .

Congratulations to Father John V. Sheridan, his two priest-assistants and lay workers on the tenth birthday of the Los Angeles' Catholic Information Center. This is one of the busiest and most attractive centers in the country. Our Lady Chapel, the heart of the center, has a schedule of services that rivals that of any of our best organized parishes.

The center sponsors numerous and continuous inquiry class series; a 4,000-volume circulating library; a book shop; the city's largest pamphlet rack; and around the clock telephone service of all sorts of religious inquiries; with three priests and a staff of nine lay people.

A most attractive booklet commemorating the center's anniversary tells the story with professional competence. To obtain a copy, write: Rev. John V. Sheridan, Catholic Information Center, 805-811 South Flower St., Los Angeles 17, Calif.

GUILDS OF ST. PAUL . . .

The Proceedings of the Fourth Convention of the National Guilds of St. Paul, held May 15-16, 1959 in Lexington, Ky., is now available. Along with talks by Mr. Dale Francis there is a wealth of information regarding the procedures followed at the various Guilds. If you are interested in the after care of converts and what can be done for them in our parishes, write for your copy: Rt. Rev. Msgr. Leonard Nienaber, National Guilds of St. Paul, 438 West Second Street, Lexington, Ky.

READING I'VE LIKED . . .

Lack of space often necessitates a delay in reporting books that we should call to your attention. Here are some that helped me particularly. No priest can ignore the problems and opportunities that suburbia presents to us today. Father Andrew M. Greeley in *The Church and the Suburbs* (Sheed & Ward, \$3.50) pursues these themes with insight, verve and a sense of apostleship.

What is the parish? What should it be doing in face of today's challenges? Many of these and other questions are thoroughly explored in *The Parish: from Theology to Practice* (The Newman Press, \$2.75). It represents the response of the professors of the Canisianum in Innsbruck, Austria, to the request of the seminarians for enlightenment on historical and pastoral questions concerning the functions of the parish in the Church.

Priest-catechists and inquirers are more than ever concerned to know more about the Bible and its central themes. Monsignor John J. Dougherty in *Searching the Scriptures* goes far in fulfilling this need. He does so with the knowledge of a scholar and the warmth of the popular preacher and lecturer.

A Pamphlet Bible Series, Rev. Neil J. McEleney, C.S.P., General Editor, (Paulist Press, 401 West 59th Street, New York 19, N. Y.; 75¢ a copy; \$7.50 annual subscription) has won immediate acceptance. Appearing periodically are the books of the Bible in the unabridged Confraternity of Christian Doctrine translation: with a commentary by a member of the Catholic Biblical Society of America; two self-teaching quizzes and attractive drawings.